



The State of New Hampshire  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner

March 8, 2007

The Honorable Cindy Rosenwald, Chairman  
House Health, Human Services & Elderly Affairs Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 205  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

**Re: HB 688 establishing the council on the relationship between public health and the environment**

Dear Chairman Rosenwald and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on behalf of the Department of Environmental Services (DES) in support of HB 688, which seeks to establish a council on the relationship between public health and the environment. DES has long recognized that environmental hazards can have a major impact on public health and the quality of life in New Hampshire, and has always worked diligently to reduce exposure to environmental risks in the state. Over the past decade, DES has been challenged with addressing more and more public health issues that demand our attention, requiring us to set priorities and work collaboratively with others in order to efficiently and effectively tackle the issues of greatest importance.

Over the past six years, DES has found that our involvement in the *Legislative Commission to Study the Relationship between Public Health and the Environment* has helped us to prioritize our efforts and collaborate with others to address these important issues. Through the Commission, which was established by Chapter 114:2, Laws of 2000, DES has been able to participate in a forum where important environmental issues that affect public health in the state are recognized, discussed, and prioritized by Commission members including legislators, state agencies, and members of the public. Further, the Commission members have then worked collaboratively to identify reasonable solutions to these problems.

DES views the Council that would be formed by enactment of HB 688 as a continuation of this collaborative work, and we wholeheartedly support its creation. DES is committed to a safe and healthy environment for all New Hampshire citizens. By identifying environmental health areas where our citizens may currently be under-protected and recommending appropriate action to enhance such protection, this council can significantly assist state and local public health and environmental agencies in prioritizing future efforts to have the greatest health benefit for our citizens.

Thank you again for the opportunity to offer our support for HB 688. Please call me at 271-3503 or Richard G. Rumba, Administrator of the Public Health Assessment Section, at 271-1987 if you have any questions or would like further information.

Sincerely,

  
for Thomas S. Burack  
Commissioner

cc: House Health, Human Services & Elderly Affairs Committee Members  
Sen. Martha Fuller Clark

DES Web site: [www.des.nh.gov](http://www.des.nh.gov)

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